(d) how much foreign exchange by way of loss is spent/lost in the process of delayed unloading;

(e) whether Government have studied the world standard of unloading cargo; and

(f) if so, how does it compared with our ports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) The capacity requirements of various Major Ports are assessed by the Government at the time of formulation of Five Year Plans on the basis of the traffic projections for various types of cargoes and are reviewed from time to time.

During 8th Five Year Plan, it was envisaged to increase the aggregate capacity of Major Ports from 169.23 million tonnes, existing at the beginning of 8th Plan, to 237 million tonnes by the end of 8th Plan period. The aggregate port capacity as on 31-3-94 is about 173.0 million tonnes.

(c) During the 8th Five Year Plan period, schemes costing about Rs. 1600 crores have been sanctioned till date which aim at enhancing the aggregate capacity of Major Ports by 39.80 million tonnes.

(d) No precise estimate for such loss is available.

(e) and (f) The unloading rate of cargo depends upon number of factors like type of cargoes, ship size, parcel size etc. Constant efforts are made for improving the handling rates of various types of cargoes.

National Highway works in West Bengal

1307. SHRI MD. SALIM: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the amount sanctioned for the original work of National Highway in progress in West Bengal is about Rs. 120 crores;

(b) whether minimum requirement of fund for the above mentioned work during the current financial year is Rs. 41 crores;

(c) whether against the above requirement, only a sum of Rs. 18 crores have been allocated by Government of which Rs. 3 crores have been paid to Eastern Railways on the Government's directive for repairing of Vivekananda Bridge and Rs. 1.8 crores paid for land acquisition in connection with widening and improvement of National Highway from Raniganj to Baraker in West Bengal;

(d) whether the balance amount is absolutely inadequate to maintain the pace of original work in progress; and

(e) if so, what action is being propised to be taken by the Ministry so that the time and consequent cost over runs be reduced by a further allocation of Rs. 23 to 25 crores?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) No, Sir. An amount of Rs. 143.23 crores has been sanctioned for original works in progress including externally aided projects.

(b) No, Sir. The requirement of funds for N. H. works in progress during the current year is Rs. 38.88 crores.

(c) An amount of Rs. 29.00 crores has been allocated for NH works including externally aided projects, out of which a sum of Rs. 3.0 crores is earmarked for Eastern Railway and Rs. 0.53 crores for land acquisition for Raniganj-Baraker section of the National Highway.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Due to constraints of resources, it is not possible to allocate more funds.

National Highway safety scheme

1308. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Highway Safety Scheme envisaged for Inter-State high density

traffic arteries has failed to take off, as per the news report appeared in the Hindustan Times', dated 24th October, 1994 entitled "Highway Safety Scheme a non Starter".

(b) if so, what are the facts in this regard;

(c) whether Government propose to commence any fresh scheme in this regard.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) There is no National Highway Safety Scheme. However, during 1983-84 the Government introduced a National Highway Patrolling Scheme as a pilot project for one year which envisaged setting up of Traffic Aid Posts along selected highways on an experimental basis. The traffic Aid Posts were intended to provide immediate on-the-spot medical aid to accident victims, removal of broken-down vehicles and to ensure smooth flow of traffic. Subsequently, on a review of the scheme and taking into account various factors including financial ones, the scheme was not pursued.

(c) to (e) During 1993-94 the Highway Patrolling Scheme was modified under which depending upon availability of funds, selected State Governments are provided financial assistance for procurement of cranes and ambulances with a view to providing immediate succour to the victims of roads accidents and removing broken down vehicles on the National Highways. During 1993-94 six States viz. Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and West Bengal were provided financial assistance under this scheme.

Modernisation of Hooghli Dock and Ports Engineers Ltd.

1309. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

SHRI MD. SALIM:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 3043 given in the Rajya Sabha on 17th August, 1994 and state:

(a) whether it is also a fact that Government took 24 months to nationalise the unit and did not provide necessary approval and finance to meet this essential expenditure for prevention of technological deterioration in time, which substantially raised the cash losses of the unit;

(c) whether it is a fact that despite several expert committees reports recommending substantial investment from Rs. 8 crores by Admiral Dev Committee to Rs. 55 crores by IHI, the total outlay on Capital expenditure has been a meagre Rs. 7.85 crores phased over 8 years approximately; and

(d) whether this low and inadequate level of capital expenditure and release of funds in driblets by Government led to the failure of the Company; and

(e) if not the reasons for delay in modernisation plan for the Company so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The company was nationalised w.e.f. 28.6.84 which is within a period of 16 months from the date of recommendation of the Expert Group, headed by Rear Admiral Krishan Dev. Since then a financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 15.56 crores has been provided so as to enable the company to modernise, update and keep its production/infrastructural facilities at the